

## **I'd Like To Fall Asleep (to the beat of you breathing) by AabH**

**Category:** Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** Alcohol, Established Relationship, Gay Will Byers, Homophobic Language, M/M, Protective Mike Wheeler

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Will Byers

**Relationships:** Will Byers/Mike Wheeler

**Status:** Completed

**Published:** 2021-06-15

**Updated:** 2021-06-15

**Packaged:** 2022-03-31 14:23:29

**Rating:** Teen And Up Audiences

**Warnings:** No Archive Warnings Apply

**Chapters:** 1

**Words:** 3,779

**Publisher:** archiveofourown.org

**Summary:**

Mike is called to retrieve Will who's too drunk to get himself home safely.

\*\*

Mike never saw him dance, especially not in public. The last time Mike had gotten to witness anything even remotely similar had been their junior prom, and it was only because the Electric Slide had started playing and skipping out on it when the whole gymnasium participated would have made him stand out more than just joining in. So Will, usually reserved and quiet, found himself awkwardly shuffling back and forth, clapping his hands and popping his knees while Mike tried to give him an impromptu lesson with varying degrees of success. The Party had skipped their senior prom to go drinking at the quarry even though they all still dressed up and posed for pictures so their parents never knew about it. Seeing Will dance now would have been almost endearing to watch if he hadn't been so clearly inebriated.



## I'd Like To Fall Asleep (to the beat of you breathing)

### Author's Note:

CW: Alcohol use, homophobic language

The first ring was more of an annoyance than anything. Mike didn't even register what it was, only that it was *loud* and didn't make sense in the context of the dream he'd been having. Why the hell would there be a phone in the middle of a ball pit? Why would Cyclops from the X-Men be holding it out for him? When it rang again, Mike frowned. By the third one, he rolled over on his side and reached, fumbling in the dark of the room to search by touch alone for the phone on the bedside table. He dropped the handle the first time before successfully pressing the speaker to his ear on the second.

"-Ello?"

"Mike! Is that you?"

He pulled the thing away from his ear, frowning harder.

"Max? Why are you yelling?"

"Can't hear you over the music! Hey! Are you awake?"

"I am now," he mumbled, glancing at the clock radio. "Why are you calling? It's one in the morning."

"Hey cool! Glad you're up! Can you come get Will? He's being a sloppy bitch!"

"What?"

"He's druuuunk," she sang through the phone, making Mike pull it away from his ear again. Apparently the redhead had forgotten all about volume control and had come to the unilateral decision that Mike's ear drums needed bursting just because wherever she'd found herself was doing the same to her. Will was being 'a sloppy bitch'? Max didn't sound like she was anyone to talk. Mike rubbed his eyes and looked at the clock again, trying to decide if it was worth it to

get up and come get Will when the bars would be closed in an hour anyway. Surely Max could deal with him for another hour, couldn't she? After all, she was the one who'd invited him out in the first place.

"Max, I have finals tomorrow. Why can't you just take him home or get him a cab?"

"We're not ready to go and he doesn't want one!" she shouted, making Mike wince again. "He doesn't want to leave, but he's about two shots away from blacking out and getting a concussion on his way down!"

"What about Dustin? Isn't he with you guys?" Mike asked, rubbing the bridge of his nose. Dustin was pretty responsible, at least compared to the rest of the degenerates Mike called his friends. Mike couldn't imagine he'd want to be at the bar until closing.

Max made a noise that sounded very much like she was blowing raspberries and he could envision her rolling her eyes at him through the phone. It reminded Mike of when they were in middle school and he found himself once again marveling at her maturity and grace.

"Please, he took off two hours ago. Said he needed to sleep cause he has a date tomorrow," she sighed, and even over the phone, Mike could hear the pout. "Pllleeeeeease come get him. He's gonna get us kicked out. Dumb asshole's been trying to convince everyone to let him paint their faces."

"He brought paint to a bar?" Mike asked, pinching the bridge of his nose harder as the headache brought on from Max's shouting grew.

"Nooo he stole my eyeliner and he's ruuuiiiing it," she complained, a high, loud whine in her voice. "Come get him, Mike. I'm begging you!"

Mike rolled over again, half tempted to just hang up on her and go back to sleep. He knew everyone else was done with finals, but he still had his last lab exam and really didn't want to fuck it up just because Max was annoyed that Will was 'ruining' her makeup. It wasn't like she wore much anyway and really, how expensive could it

be? They were the ones who'd decided to go out drinking without him instead of doing the courteous thing and just waiting until his last exam was done too, so he could join in the festivities. But Max was still yelling in his ear and he could hear El and the rest doing the same. It was starting to sound like a chant, and it was making his head throb. None of them would be in any shape to take Will home, and if he was going to get thrown out because he was bothering people...

"Fine. Fine, I'm coming," he agreed, rubbing the sleep from his eyes. "Keep him from doing anything stupid, okay?"

"I'm trying but he's already had four yeager bombs and two washington apples. I don't know what *I'm* supposed to do at this point," she said, exasperated. "Just come get him. I'll order him a cran vodka minus the liquor, how's that?"

"It's fine, just keep him away from the hard stuff. Where are you?"

"Hawthorne's, down on main. Or The Pony Keg? I don't know, hang on, let me check," she mumbled, her voice muffled from stepping away from the phone booth to look.

"You don't even know where you are?" Mike asked, even more annoyed than he had been. "Do the rest of you guys need a ride too?"

"Hawthorne's! I was right the first time!" she announced in jubilation, ignoring the question. "Hurry up and come get this walking disaster before he gets us all a lifetime ban! I'm too young to be banned from the best bar in town!"

Mike pinches his brow together and tried to concentrate on not snapping at her. *'Best bar' my ass. You didn't even know where you were until a few seconds ago.*

"I'm coming, I'm coming," he growled instead of letting some biting remark pass his lips. He balanced the phone between his shoulder and ear while he rolled over again. The cord was getting wrapped around his neck as he searched for the pair of jeans he'd thrown on the floor and some kind of semi clean shirt in the dark. He almost threw the damn thing in frustration when it pulled so tight it started

to choke him. In his ear, the line went dead without so much as a 'thank you'. Tired and a little more than what he'd describe as grumpy, Mike unwrapped himself from the cord and rolled out of bed as he hung the phone back up on the receiver. God, he hated his friends sometimes.

\*\*

Will wasn't as difficult to pick out of the crowd as Mike had thought he'd be considering how crowded the bar was. In fact, he was sort of hard to miss since he was dancing near the pool table, face covered in glitter and makeup half smeared from sweat, in what he'd decided was his own personal dance floor. No one was saying anything to him, at least not yet, but the people around him tried to continue their game and shot him annoyed looks whenever they had to squeeze by to aim. Max hadn't been joking. Will really *was* trashed.

Mike never saw him dance, especially not in public. The last time Mike had gotten to witness anything even remotely similar had been their junior prom, and it was only because the Electric Slide had started playing and skipping out on it when the whole gymnasium participated would have made him stand out more than just joining in. So Will, usually reserved and quiet, found himself awkwardly shuffling back and forth, clapping his hands and popping his knees while Mike tried to give him an impromptu lesson with varying degrees of success. The Party had skipped their senior prom to go drinking at the quarry, even though they all still dressed up and posed for pictures so their parents never knew about it. Seeing Will dance now would have been almost endearing to watch if he hadn't been so clearly inebriated.

Mike squeezed his way through the people, apologizing as he went while wondering just where Will had gotten the lipstick and eyeshadow since he'd *certainly* not gotten it from Max. Maybe El had coughed them up for him, But Mike doubted it. The petite woman hadn't been keen on sharing much of anything with Will since he'd ruined her bedsheets by trying to add a textured ruffle to them for 'flare'. The question of where Will had gotten the makeup was answered when Mike saw the slim, shorter man's dance partner.

The girl leaned against Will heavily, trying to apply more blush to his

already flushed and red cheeks as they danced. Will laughed, head thrown back, eyes unfocused but bright as he let a hand rest on her hip and swayed in time with her body. She draped one arm over his shoulder and, because she was so small herself, it was the first time Will had ever really looked *tall* to Mike. And despite how clearly drunk he was, he looked *good* when he moved. Who would have thought that Will had any rhythm, or that he could move his hips that way? Who knew that quiet, passive Will would be bumping against a stranger, his neck rolling from side to side, not caring at all as people watched? Mike pushed his way through until he was close enough to touch Will's arm to get his attention.

"Hey," he called, trying not to scream in Will's ear the way Max had screamed in his. "Hey, you having fun?"

Will glanced over his shoulder, eyes glazed, and tried to focus on the person who was interrupting him.

"Sooo much," he slurred, smiling. "Why? Wanna join us?"

"Yeah," the girl asked, still trying to apply the rouge to her dance partner's face. "You're hot. Wanna dance with us? Make it a threesome?"

Mike blinked down at her, flattered, but far too tired to deal with this as Will continued to look at him, smiling.

"Thanks, no. I wanna talk to him though," he mumbled, tugging on Will's arm, dislodging it's place on the girl's hip as he took the drink Will was about to drop anyway from his other hand. Mike sniffed it, ready to go off on Max if he found her, but it seemed she'd kept her word; it smelled like cranberry juice and lime.

"Hey, you here for him?" one of the pool players asked, craning his neck to see.

"Yeah," Mike confirmed and raised a hand in apology. "Sorry, we're leaving."

"Good. Can you get this fag and his hag out of here? They're blocking our shots."

Mike felt himself flush from both anger and embarrassment, and he clamped his mouth closed before he said something he'd regret. He hoped Will hadn't heard that; he was always so sensitive to those kinds of remarks and tended to get quiet or hide for hours after. Mike didn't want Will to wilt away in embarrassment, not when he was in some alcohol induced bloom. Mike moved to stand in front of Will and block his view of the strangers, just in case he had and the alcohol had done away with his inhibitions enough for him to snap something in return instead of his usual, bashful reaction of ducking his head and avoiding eye contact. Thankfully, Will hadn't seemed to notice or care, so Mike took the opportunity to set the drink of the edge of the pool table while he moved. If it spilled and ruined the men's game... oops, wouldn't that be an unfortunate mishap? With a cattish grin to himself, Mike tugged Will's arm a little harder, accidentally making him stumble.

"Hey," the shorter man complained, frowning now instead of smiling. "We're having fun."

"Time to go, Will."

Will looked at him, confused, and tried to pull away with far less grace than he'd had moments ago when he was dancing.

"No, I don't want to."

Mike ground his teeth. Max had said Will was being difficult, but Mike really didn't want to cause any more of a scene than was necessary, so dragging him out was a no go. He was saved from having to do that as Will's dance partner patted his other arm.

"It's okay," the girl said, swaying where she was. "I'm feeling a little sick. I think I need to puke," she added, a little green around the gills. Will looked disappointed, but accepted it as she took his free hand and scrawled what Mike presumed was supposed to be her phone number in illegible print across Will's skin with her lipstick. "Call me! Let's do this next weekend! Tell your hot friend to join in next time!"

"For sure!" Will agreed, even as he stumbled. Mike pressed a hand to Will's stomach to steady him and hoped the pressure didn't make the shorter man empty the contents all over the floor. Will glanced up at



him, eyes cloudy but brows pinched in what looked like concentration. It looked like he was trying to decide something.

“Yep, sounds fun,” Mike said with as much eagerness as he could manage given the circumstances. He really just wanted to get Will out of there and to bed with as little resistance as he could. He pulled gently on Will’s arm and moved the hand he’d been using to balance him, just in case Will followed the girl’s lead and began vomiting.

He stopped walking and glanced back down at Will when his friend stumbled again, catching his foot around the leg of one of the bar stools. Reluctantly, he hooked his arm around Will’s waist and hoisted him up, so he could stand more easily and be guided through the bar. Will mumbled something that might have been an apology and rolled his head to look up at Mike.

“Where are we going?” he mumbled, lips pressed in a pout.

“I’m taking you home.”

Mike paused, confused when Will pushed a hand against his chest and tried to wiggle away.

“No thanks. You’re sweet and all, but I’m not going home with you,” Will slurred. Mike frowned, brows drawn together. How fucking drunk was Will? Mike adjusted his hold but didn’t let go.

“Will, you need to go home. You’re wasted.”

“Mm fine,” the petite man protested, trying again to squirm free. “You’re not my mom, you can’t tell me what to do.”

“Come on, I’ll drive you,” Mike insisted, voice low as he fought to keep his grip on Will who, in his drunken state, felt as if he was made out of jello and kept almost slipping through Mike’s grasp.

He really didn’t want to draw any attention their way, especially not from the people who’d called Will a fag. They didn’t seem like the most patient and understanding of people, though Mike supposed he should have been grateful that tossing slurs around was all they’d done. Two weeks ago someone had kicked the shit out a guy not far from here just because they *looked* queer. Will was lucky he hadn’t

gotten hurt acting the way he was, makeup smeared all over him and inviting other men to dance. Mike tightened his hold around Will's waist and helped him out of the bar towards the sidewalk despite the weak, slurred protests from the brunet. Mike had to park almost a block away since everyone and their mom (other than Mike, apparently) was out celebrating the end of the semester. Dragging Will there without dropping him was turning out to be a struggle and for the life of him, Mike couldn't understand how someone so small could feel like a sack of bricks just because they were drunk.

Will leaned on him, head rolling on his shoulders, and spoke again.

"Fine, you can give me a ride. But I'm not going to your place. Just take me to mine, okay?"

"Sure, you got it," Mike agreed, just happy to have Will not fighting him or making a scene, even if the request was a strange one.

Mike drove in silence, trying to pay attention to the road and not hit any party goers on the way home. He had one near miss, but managed to do an alright job of navigating the way considering how many college students wove in and out of the roads like there weren't two thousand pound vehicles barreling down the streets operated by people just as drunk as the pedestrians. The only time he thought he might crash was when Will suddenly started pounding on the window and shouting 'There! Turn up here! That's my street!' as if Mike didn't know perfectly well where they lived.

Getting Will out of the car was a challenge, but not one Mike wasn't up to. He just needed to get him inside and into bed and then Mike could fall back asleep and (hopefully) pass his lab exam with flying colors. Things only got complicated when Will started kicking off his shoes and trying to wiggle out of his jeans. Mike had tried to help him balance while lowering him to the bed, but Will put a hand on Mike's chest and pushed him away, flopping onto his side as he did.

"O-kay. Thanks for the ride, but it's time for you to go."

Mike felt his nostrils flare in annoyance but he bit his tongue so he didn't snap at the shorter man. He just wanted to get in bed and fall asleep, he really didn't want to deal with this right now. Will was

clearly fucked up, but he knew who Mike was, right? Or did he think some random guy from a bar had brought him home?

“Hey, chill. I’m just trying to help you.”

Will frowned, bottom lip stuck out as he chewed the inside of it, like he was trying to think and was having trouble.

“Thanks. Appreciate the help, but I’m not going to fuck you.”

Mike pulled away, shocked.

“Cause you’re hot and all, like, *ridiculously* attractive, but I have a boyfriend and he’s hot too and he’d kick your ass if you tried anything with me.”

“Jesus Christ, Will, how much did you have to drink?” Mike finally managed to spit out as he pulled away and halted the touch.

*You know who I am, right?*

Maybe he didn’t. As far as Mike could tell, Will seemed to really think that Mike was just a guy who’d picked him up at the bar instead of the person who he’d been sharing a bed with for the last two years. Still, it was a little flattering that even if Will didn’t recognize him, he still thought Mike was ‘ridiculously attractive’. It didn’t hurt Mike’s ego that Will thought Mike could kick his own ass either. He chuckled, curious about how long it would take Will to realize who it was who’d taken him home.

“Really? You think I’m hot?”

“Obviously,” Will laughed, rolling onto his side and running a hand through his hair. “I mean, do you own a mirror? But I already told you, I have a boyfriend. You can sleep on the couch if you want though,” he murmured, pulling the blanket up around his shoulders.

“Yeah? Well how serious are you and your boyfriend?”

“Pretty serious,” Will slurred. “Don’t think he’d like you trying to hook up with me.”

Mike laughed again, thinking it was almost cute and maybe a little sweet that Will was so adamant that there would be no way he'd let a stranger crawl under the sheets with him. But Mike had to back to bed or he'd never pass his test. He sat on the edge and began pulling his shirt off, too tired to keep the game up any longer. He was startled and nearly fell when Will shoved him, *hard*, almost knocking him clean off the mattress and tangling him in his own half discarded tee-shirt.

"Mm serious," Will drawled, eyes half closed in a scowl. "I have a boyfriend. Couch is in the living room."

"Will, come on, you know it's me, right?"

"GoodNIIIIght," Will sang, pushing him again. "Feel free to have a snack or something if you want. We keep the pantry pretty stocked."

"Hey, it was cute at first, but I really need to sleep," Mike whispered. "And you're smearing makeup on the pillowcases."

"Good thing I have a washer and dryer," Will said, sleepily. "And I already told you, couch is in the living room. You can sleep on the floor if you want, but the couch is more comfortable. Either way, you're not getting into bed with me, no matter how hot you are."

Mike looked at him, curled up and half asleep already. Will really was cute, even if he was 'a sloppy bitch'. He bent to kiss his drunk as hell boyfriend on the head and Will pushed him away again.

"Keep it up and I'll call my boyfriend. Then you'll really be in trouble,"

Will warned, barely awake.

Mike smiled, amused, and nodded.

"Okay. Can I have a pillow at least?"

"Sure. Blankets are in the hallway closet if you need one," Will murmured, clumsily shoving one of the feather stuffed things in Mike's direction.

Mike accepted it, and annoyed as he was at being kicked out of his own bed after dragging himself from it to collect Will in the first place, made his way to the couch and flopped down on it. He might have a few dark circles under his eyes in the morning, but it would be nothing compared to Will's hangover or how raw his skin would be after he managed (*if* he managed) to scrub all the glitter and lipstick off. Mike sort of doubted he'd be able to clean up *all* the glitter, but he was amused by the thought of Will trying. It was more likely that the two of them would be spending the next few months with glitter in the sheets and on their skin every time they woke up.

He smiled to himself as he pulled the old quilt around his shoulders and rolled over. He couldn't wait for his exam to be over so he could tease the hell out of Will for his behavior. Maybe they would go back to the bar next weekend to celebrate Mike's finals being over and Will would meet up with the new friend he'd made. Or, if Mike got his way, he'd get Will so drunk at home that the shorter man would dance with *him* instead of random girls at bars. Mike wanted Will to put his hand on *Mike's* hip and sway against him, his head back, mouth parted in a smile. He looked good like that. Maybe next weekend when Mike took him to bed and started peeling his clothes off, Will wouldn't kick him out.

### **Author's Note:**

This was brought on by the prompt "Come to bed" "No thanks, I have a boyfriend" and it's about as 'fluffy' as I ever get. Anyway, I hope you enjoyed it.

As always, comments and kudos are appreciated. Be well and take care of yourselves.